

### Another year already gone by?

Gee...it's already time to push away from the table full of all those good eats from Thanksgiving, and start thinking about what I'll get my better half for Christmas. I actually have it pretty good...as I only have to find gifts for her. She does the gift shopping for the 4 kids, her Dad, and me...so I guess I really have it quite easy!

Unfortunately I wasn't successful in my efforts to acquire some notes from Stack's auction of Tom O'Mara's collection of fractional currency look-alikes and advertising notes in early November. Indeed a wonderful collection which I'm sure Tom was quite proud of and enjoyed assembling over the many years he was active in postage/fractional collecting.

There are a number of events coming-up that you simply will want to keep an eye on. First-up is the upcoming Houston Coin show right here in my backyard. Heritage is hosting the auction but there isn't anything fractional-wise crossing the auction block from what I can determine. The show itself tends to be primarily coin, but there always are a few currency tables so I always go walk the floor to see if I can pick-up anything interesting.

Following this, Stack's will hold its December Coin Galleries auction. Certainly there are lots of coins. There is also a nice offering of paper money, but only a single lot of fractional. Having started collecting with the blue Whitman coin albums close to 50 years ago, I still like to look at the coins. And yes, I still have those original Whitman albums, but I've not added anything except mint sets to my coin collection in quite some time. And like everything else, they're locked-away in a bank vault.

The next really BIG event from my perspective is the FUN show in Florida. Many a fine collection of postage and fractional currency has gone across the auction block over the years at this event. It'll be interesting to see what surfaces when the auction catalog becomes available later in December. Wonder what surprises may be in store...

I find it hard to keep track of all the various auction calendars, let alone the time it takes to go through their offerings. So if I've overlooked an important auction coming-up, especially one that includes postage/fractional currency, I apologize in advance. On the other hand, if you are connected with an upcoming auction that may be of interest to our postage/fractional currency friends, let me know and if timing works-out, I would like to share news about it with our members. Until then...

Fractionally Yours,

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## Pre-FUN'2009 Activity...

If you receive our Fall newsletter later than usual, it is all my fault. In May, we returned from a week at Hilton Head to find a minor flood in our living room. Unfortunately, a lapse in coordination between the restoration company and our insurance company delayed any repair activity until August. One would think that everything would be back to normal in a matter of weeks; however, completion of repairs did not occur until Monday, November 24, and our rug and furniture are due to return the day after Thanksgiving.

So, what has been going on in the area of fractionals? Tom O'Mara's extensive collection of postage and fractional scrip and look-alikes was sold by Stack's at their November 7 auction. Although I made several friends aware of Tom's collection, I was so embroiled in house repairs that I forgot to ask my brother to execute bids for me. A truly opportunity lost.

I just received Lyn Knight's catalogue for his December 8-10 sale. This sale has only 60+ fractional lots, but features a vast number of 3-cent courtesy autographs – 57 in all – in one lot. The massive number of notes is equaled by the auction estimate -- \$75,000 to \$125,000. I have never been a big fan of courtesy autographs, but this lot (#902) is impressive, to say the least. I was surprised, however, to see that the relatively common Burke/Thompson (Friedberg auction lot #230) was not among the hoard.

I haven't heard anything from Len Glazer concerning the Heritage fractional offerings for the FUN auction. I guess I'll find out when I get the catalogue.

A few months ago, I did broker a unique uncanceled experimental note from one collector to another, but I haven't been able to make any shows since Memphis or create any deals since the aforementioned exchange.

Hopefully everyone that was a member prior to June 1<sup>st</sup> received their special perforated 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary sheet depicting the 1<sup>st</sup> issue, 25c obverse with a customized design on the reverse to commemorate our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the formation of our club in Memphis in 1983. These were mailed in a tube along with your summer newsletter. If you didn't receive it, please be sure to let our newsletter editor, Jerry Fochtman, know. It was a lot of extra effort to put together this mailing for everyone so hopefully we succeeded in getting the sheet sent to everyone that wasn't at Memphis to pick theirs up.

Hope to see some of you at FUN!

*Mike*





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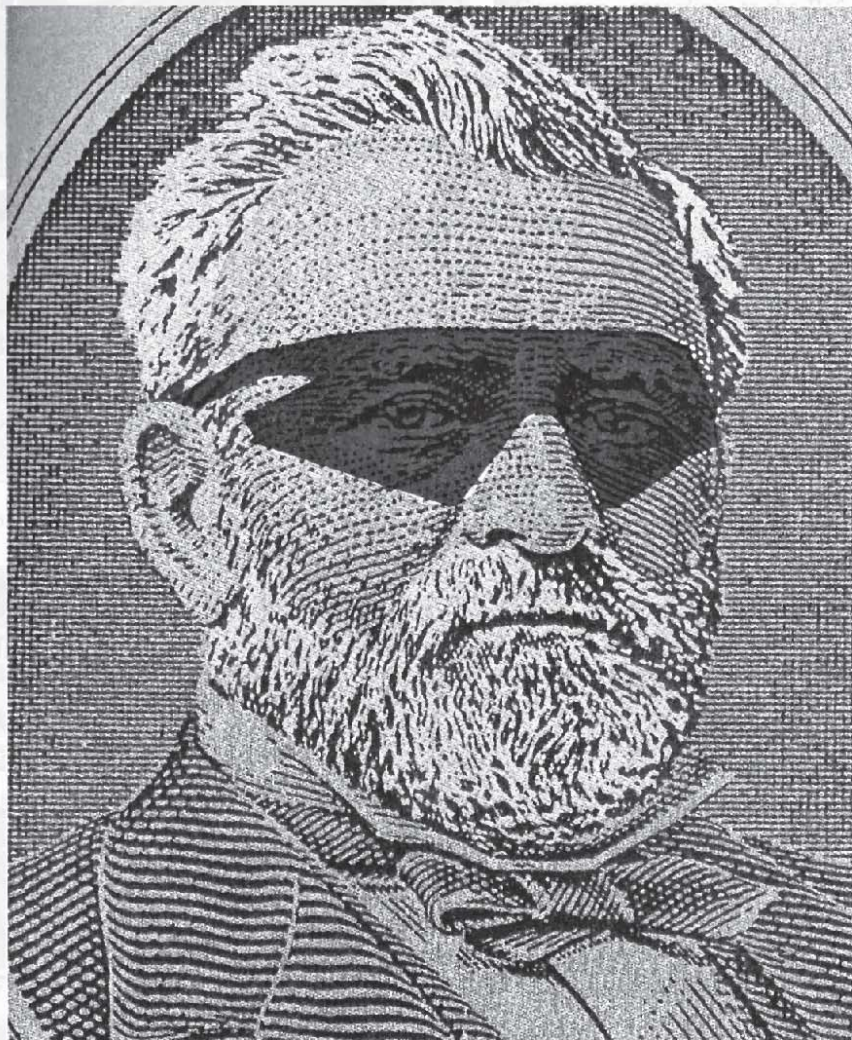
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# Spencer Morton Clark

## His Final Home

By

Benny Bolin

*authors note—I normally imbed pictures with text so as to associate them better to the text, but these are all done at the end so they can be larger.*

As most of you know (if not I will be happy to enlighten you), I have tracked SMC from birth to death and know where he was all the years of his life, the jobs he had, the scandals he was FALSELY accused of, etc. The one piece I did not have was first-hand knowledge of his final resting place. I knew he was buried in the Spring Grove Cemetery in Hartford, CT, but had never seen a picture of his grave or even of the cemetery itself.

I was very fortunate to get to go to Hartford on business in September and made sure that I worked in a visit to see his final resting place. As I drove in to Spring Grove Cemetery, I could only imagine his funeral carriage going down Main Street to 2035. I wondered if he had a carriage like the one he designed for President Lincoln (fig 1--yes, it seems SMC designed the carriage that carried Lincoln from the Capitol to the cemetery).

As you get to the front gate, you are greeted with an archway announcing the cemetery (fig 2), but not an imposing façade. It is a very beautiful place that is well maintained and full of oak and cedar trees, many of which I am sure were there as full trees or saplings when SMC passed by on his last ride.

He is buried in a family plot that is highlighted with a large monument to his parents, Ezra and Laura (fig 3). SMC, his wife and his daughter are all buried in the plot along with his parents, grandparents, brother and many other family members. One notable exception is SMC, Jr, who is not buried with the family. There are a total of 19 graves in the plot. With the exception of the large monument for Ezra and Laura (SMC's parents), all the headstones are small and totally simple without identifying anything about the person buried except their name, date of birth and death. This is especially notable for SMC's brother, Ezra, Jr, (fig 4) as he was a member of the U.S. House for Hartford from 1855 to 1859.

SMC and his wife Mariah are buried side by side to the right of his parents at the back of the plot (figs 5 & 6). Their daughter Harriett is buried in front of them. Harriett's gravestone is more ornate than her parents (fig 7). The wonder as to why the headstones were so simple instead of ornate and celebratory of the accomplishments of SMC were of wonder to me. Then, I realized, he lives in death as he did in life—behind the scenes and very non-pretentious.





Figure 1—Lincoln's funeral cart designed by SMC



Figure 2 -- Entrance to Spring Grove Cemetery



Figure 4--Ezra, Jr's, headstone



Figure 5 -- SMC's headstone



Figure 6 -- Mariah's (SMC's wife) headstone



Figure 7 -- Harriet's (SMC's daughter) headstone



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*(Membership information removed.)*

## Member's Trading Post

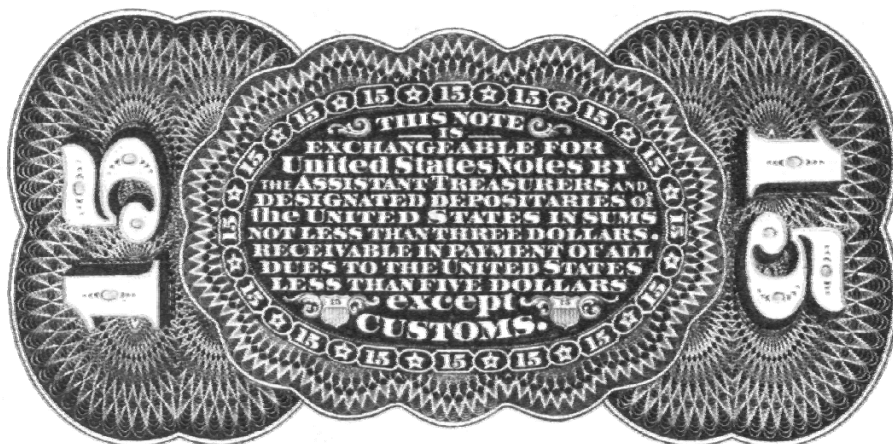
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# Spinner Signed Checks...

By

John Wilson

What follows is a Herkimer County check which is signed by Francis Spinner on the back. It's hard to find a Spinner check made out to him and endorsed on the back other than those from the Illion, New York bank hoard. There are some from other banks well-known to some of our members as well. Considering how many examples Nancy and I have of Spinner's autograph it's hard for us to find something new.

